



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

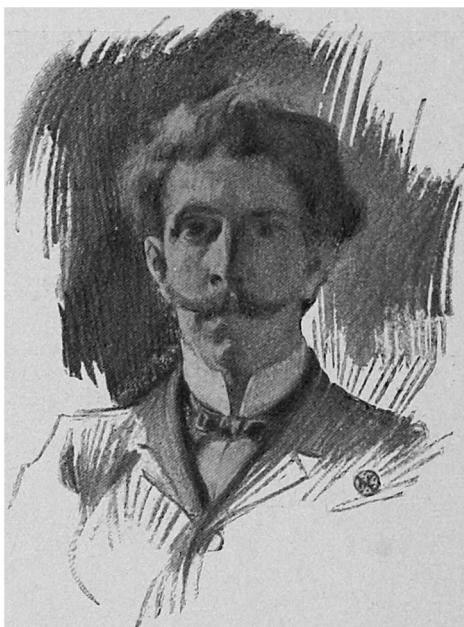
This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



PORTRAIT OF RALPH CLARKSON,
BY FRANK X. LEYENDECKER.

RALPH CLARKSON.

THE Chicago man is not necessarily such by the accident of birth-place so much as he is by his sympathy with the elements that make Chicago distinctive among cities. So we find in all the varied branches of art and science, men who have made Chicago their adopted home and are in full touch with its life, and are enthusiastic in its development. The history of Chicago is so brief that we find here, perhaps more than in any other large city, a population of foreigners, in the large sense of the word; people who come not only from the old world, but from the four quarters of our own broad land.

Ralph Clarkson, born in Amesbury, Massachusetts, is one of this classification. His earlier studies were pursued in the Art Museum School in Boston, under the late Prof. Grundemann and Prof. Frederick Crowningshield, now of New York. In 1884 he was ready for



PORTRAIT OF MRS. CHARLES E. NIXON,
BY RALPH CLARKSON,

Paris, and entered the Julian Academy under Boulanger and Lefebvre, where he remained for four years studying drawing and construction. The large canvas, lately exposed in the Art Institute, *The Arrival of News in a French Village*, dates from this period. On his return to America, in 1892, we find him in one of the studios in' the Sherwood Building in New York City, busy with portrait orders. Among a



large list may be noticed a portrait of Mr. Dwight Sanford, painted under most disadvantageous circumstances, but a pronounced success. It hangs in the Manhattan Club. About 1892 he returned to Paris, took a studio in the Impasse du Maine, of happy memory to so many American painters, where he experimented in color and the technicalities of his art. After a year or more in Italy, occupied in travel and

painting, he returned to America and in the Fall of '95 came to Chicago on a visit. Fortunate in his large list of newly made friends and attracted by the evident enthusiasm for art in certain circles, Mr. Clarkson decided to remain, and in a comparatively short time was permanently quartered in the richest and most attractive studio in Chicago, as the illustration of one of his pictures shows. His studio in the



PORTRAIT, AFTER FIRST SITTING,
BY RALPH CLARKSON.

Masonic Temple, filled with genuine old Masters belonging to the Sawyer Collection, fine rugs and the usual melange of draperies and bric-a-brac, is a show-place unique in Chicago. An invitation to his Saturday Afternoons is not an empty honor.

He was married in 1890 to a daughter of Judge David S. Calhoun of Hartford, Connecticut. The refinement, social attainment and



ITALIAN GIRL, BY RALPH CLARKSON.

rare artistic sympathy of Mrs. Clarkson are the secret of much of his success in Chicago. In a brief two years he has risen to a conspicuous, perhaps the first place in the local art world, and his exhibition lately held at O'Brien's Gallery on Wabash avenue, demonstrates his right to such a position. Mr. Clarkson is well educated, approachable and sympathetic in his personality, speaks a number of languages, is of conspicuous literary ability and an interesting speaker. His lecture last year in the Art Institute Course on *Picturers, How to Judge and Enjoy Them*, was a pronounced success and was repeated at the Art Congress of the Central Art Association in May. His address to the ladies of the Fortnightly Club on *Chicago Art and its Problems*, a short time since, showed the breadth of his views and an earnest of his enthusiasm for local art, while it created much discussion and comment. An artist who brings to his profession genuine culture and intelligence is much more influential and his social position is much more important. Mr. Clarkson's culture is a powerful agent in his success here as a prominent artist.

This article is too short to go into a detailed criticism or analysis of Mr. Clarkson's painting. It is direct and frank. While distinctly modern it is not conspicuous for the many isms that our later art too often shows. His color is reserved, showing distinct refinement in tone and value rather than brilliancy and strong contrast. His drawing and modeling are adequate. His taste is invariably good and there is a certain elegance in all his portraits. This is conspicuous in the portrait of Mrs. C—, a stately personage in a costume of voluminous drapery. It is very well placed on the canvas. The color harmony is quiet, rich and exceptional. In the full length portrait of Mrs. Charles E. Nixon, the daring pink dress has provoked various opinions. The likeness is excellent, the canvas is pleasing, the composition simple and refined, with its low toned tapestry background, but one feels that the artist is more completely himself in his rendering of the harmonious grays in the half-length portrait of Mr. Laflin, of which nothing but praise can be said. This is one of the best male portraits seen in the West for many a day, and if Mr. Clarkson had limited his exhibition to this one work his reputation would be assured. Another portrait equally sympathetic in treatment is the one of Ex-Governor Altgeld. The head is seen in profile, there is no attempt at display, but the expression of reserve force in the sitter and a refinement that many of the Governor's political enemies never mention is here rarely reproduced. It is a strong likeness and represents the man as his friends and many admirers would wish to have him remembered. Quite different in character is the portrait of Mayor Harrison. The head is



INTERIOR OF MR. CLARKSON'S STUDIO.

almost full front, and represents a man of activity, full of buoyant health and undoubted courage. The chin belongs to the leader and suggests the aggressive man in public life, while the frank blue eyes show clearly enough that his private home life is dear to him. This portrait shows the man and removes many of the doubts the numberless cuts and cartoons of him have awakened.

These three male portraits show great diversity of character, color and treatment and illustrate the versatility of Mr. Clarkson's talent. It is rare also to find an artist who is successful in painting both men and women so equally well. He shows but one canvas of childhood which is interesting and well painted. In a painting of the nude we have a fine example of breadth and purity, and one of his best essays in flesh painting. The beauty of form and charm of fresh girlish color is admirably rendered.

Mr. Clarkson has shown in different exhibitions his strength as a water-color painter, mostly landscapes done in Europe, which are very transparent in color and broadly treated. In his studio are some studies in water color painted in one of the beautiful estates in Evan-

ston, which show a much more reserved color scheme. He was one of the original members of the New York Water Color Club.

The art of Mr. Clarkson appeals to a refined taste as the interest shown by many of our very best people in his recent exhibition testify. As a portrait painter he ranks among the best in the country and our people have a right to be justly proud of his connection with the art of Chicago.

The Art Association of Chicago, recently organized and representing the union of the art interests of the many artistic, social and political clubs of this city, is a most important movement. Mr. Clarkson is one of the executive board and thoroughly interested in its development. The prime motive so far is to interest the public in local art, to patronize local exhibitions, and create a demand for the works of local artists. Many good artists have left Chicago because they found no sphere here for their artistic usefulness. Chicago must do something for her artists if she expects to hold any position of importance in the rank of sister cities in art. To allow such a man and artist as the subject of this brief article to leave the city would be not only to lose one gifted painter, but would for a long time deter any other artist from making Chicago a home for himself and his art. It would be a distinct loss to our local art and a severe blow to the faithful few who remain. Chicago is about to enter into a new life in art, a distinct renaissance, and instead of sending her best men away as she has so long and foolishly done, she is ready to offer every hope to remain, will encourage other brilliant wielders of the brush and chisel to come, and surely establish a center of art enthusiasm, art production and art patronage and appreciation that will make her a leader. Chicago is the center geographically, she will some day be the center of the United States in all branches of culture, and the title of Chicago artist will be a title of honor and not of reproach and insignificance.

CHARLES FRANCIS BROWNE.



THE CA D'ORO PALACE, VENICE.
WATER COLOR, BY RALPH CLARKSON.